

T E N N E S S E E F O L K L O R E S O C I E T Y

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VOLUME VIII

June, 1942

NUMBER 2

Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin

Published four times a year by the
Tennessee Folklore Society

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Membership fee and subscription to the Bulletin, one dollar a year

EARLY CHAPTERS OF TENNESSEE

by

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The decision of the Federal Government to construct the Norris Dam in 1933 prompted certain citizens of Knoxville and the vicinity and several members of the University of Tennessee faculty to urge an investigation of archaeological sites in the area to be inundated. An appeal was made to the Smithsonian Institution and the Tennessee Valley Authority, with the result that the latter agency agreed to sponsor the investigations. The Federal Relief Emergency Administration offered to supply the supervision and labor, and work was commenced early in January, 1934. Within several months the number of persons employed reached a total of five hundred.

By June of the same year the investigations were completed and all archaeological materials, with the exception of the skeletal remains, were presented to the University of Tennessee. The skeletal material was given to the University of Kentucky. The cultural value of the data which these investigations produced was immediately recognized by President James D. Hoskins who, accordingly, urged the Board of Directors to assume the sponsorship of further archaeological investigations in other areas of the state. In September, 1934 a Division of Anthropology was established. From that date until July 1, 1942 an average of 150 people were constantly employed in the work. The major part of the cost was defrayed by the Work Project Administration and

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the Tennessee Valley Authority. Other financial aid was extended by the American Philosophical Society and the National Research Council. The total cost of the investigations was in the neighborhood of \$600,000.00 -- one of the most extensive archaeological research projects ever to be undertaken.

The emergency arising from the rapid construction of dams along the Tennessee River by the Tennessee Valley Authority necessitated large scale excavation. In almost no other region of the United States are prehistoric village sites and earthworks to be found in such abundance as in the broad bottom lands of the Tennessee River and its tributaries. It became a race with time to recover the record of Tennessee prehistoric occupants before its irrevocable destruction by the vast man-made reservoirs. Three of the large reservoir areas were subjected to rather close scrutiny, and a wealth of important data, artifact and skeletal material was recovered. In four other large reservoir areas it was not possible to conduct any work due to the lack of labor, and it is regrettable that the important data which they contain will be lost forever.

During the past four years a large laboratory force has been busily engaged in a study of the materials which have been brought in from the field. Little of the results of these studies have as yet been published due to the lack of funds. The three story building which has been used as a repository has served as a laboratory, rather than a museum. The lack of published data and of a museum building is to be regretted since there is no other means whereby the public may acquaint itself with the interesting knowledge which has been unearthed in the Tennessee area.

ETHNOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The first glimpses of Indian life in the Southeast recorded by the white man indicate that the region was fairly well populated by tribal groups having different languages and customs. At the same time various relationships existed between communities which included political, social and economic aspects. The fundamental pattern of life throughout the region was very similar in spite of local diversification. All of the groups relied to a considerable extent upon agriculture for subsistence, corn, beans and squash being the principal cultivated food crops. Hunting and fishing, wildfruits, berries, nuts, wild plants and roots provided other abundant food sources. The communities were predominantly semi-rural villages, with an occasional large and important town which served as an economic and political center.

The political organization tended toward fairly large integrations into confederacies, at least from the linguistic standpoint. The separate communities within the confederacies were autonomous units organized on a democratic basis. The heads of households had due weight in public affairs, and merit alone awarded titles of distinction and influence in public life upon individuals of both sexes. There were civil and military leaders, but the highest titles generally signified only political officers to whom the group had delegated legislative, judicial executive powers. The councils of the confederacies were composed of town, tribal or clan representatives. As a usual thing the strength of political organization was in contrast to the weakness of the ritualistic organization. The great ceremonies, such as the green corn ceremony and the ball games, were strongly secular in nature, although initiating societies existed and a certain amount of ritual was included in most communal activities.

The social system throughout most of the Southeastern groups was based on the rights, privileges and obligations associated with matrilineal clans, which were also the primary political units, since the political councils were composed of individuals elected by their clans. The village community worked together as a body in preparing the fields and planting crops, although the fields were divided and marked for individual households and harvests gathered separately. Homes were built by the whole town sometimes assisted by neighboring towns of the same tribe.

Minor differences existed in technology but there were many general similarities. The dwelling houses were carefully constructed of logs, wattle work and clay daub, and were equipped with simple furniture consisting of beds and seats. Matting and various fabrics were woven from split cane, wild hemp, wild flax and bark. Pottery making was well advanced and revealed individuality in decorative styles as well as practical adaptations for many purposes. The production of tools and ornaments made from bone, stone, shell, wood, and to a lesser extent copper, was technically excellent, and early narratives of the sixteenth century reveal sincere admiration for Southeastern technology on the part of observers, notwithstanding the fact that tales of the splendor of Middle America and Peru were already familiar to them.

An intensive aboriginal trade occurred throughout the Southeast. Materials such as salt, skins, feathers, copper, marine shells, Ilex cassine leaves, (used for the ceremonial "black drink"), and probably many manufactured objects were important articles of trade that circulated in the region and beyond its borders.

It is possible that many of the similarities which existed may have been largely due to parallelism resulting from similar basic

economies. Such elements of culture as towns with closely grouped habitations and community centers may have been the result of an agricultural subsistence basis which permitted an increase in population and a stability of settlements and gave rise to a formalized social and political organization regulating community life. On the other hand, the large sedentary communities of the sixteenth century not only show striking resemblances in generalized culture traits, but also many practical identities in specific details of technology indicative of frequent contacts. Furthermore, the accumulating archaeological evidence allows for only a relatively limited period of time preceding historic contacts for the spread of the highly sedentary communities throughout the Southeast-another fact accounting for similarities.

The community centers seem to have been both political and religious in function and it does not seem wise, in view of historical accounts, to consider that the great substructure mounds of this region were erected for buildings which were either exclusively ceremonial or strictly secular in function. Indications are that there was considerable secularization of community life related to these large elevated structures, and the religious functions were merely a part rather than the whole of the complex.

The process of urbanization of populations which has been evident in modern life was apparently operative during the late prehistoric and protohistoric period of the Southeast. This tendency seems to be characteristic of most of the prehistoric culture designated by archaeologists as the Mississippi pattern. This urbanization is evidenced by several features. Important evidence is the tendency of the late village toward orderly arrangements of closely placed habitations within the community limits and the practice of rebuilding dwelling houses on the

same lots occupied by destroyed houses--a concept of land tenure. Related to this is the retention of a specific location for the community center and the rebuilding of destroyed community structures on the same spot, a custom which resulted in periodically increasing the height of the foundation and thus produced the large substructure mounds so abundant in the Southeast.

Historical accounts as a whole indicate that wealth differentiations were not great in spite of the honor and distinction accorded to the chiefs and the fact that these leaders could control a certain amount of the wealth of the groups. Some difference in economic status are suggested by the number and kinds of objects which were placed with the dead. Here archaeological data may supplement ethnological information to some extent. Generally only a minority of the burials show accompanying articles. This, of course, does not rule out the possibility that perishable objects were placed with many of those which show no accompaniments. Nevertheless one might reasonably infer that more value was attached to fine objects made of enduring materials than those of the perishable type.

The most important peoples of the Southeast in early historic times were the Muskoghean-speaking Creek, Choctaw, Apalachee, Alibamu and Chickasaw; the Iroquoian-speaking Cherokee, the Siouan-speaking Catawba; and the Timucua, Calusa, Natchez and Yuchi. Lesser groups were the Algonkian-speaking Shawnee, and a number of small tribes whose villages were included in the larger confederacies. Notwithstanding linguistic differences most of these peoples possessed cultures corresponding rather closely to the brief summary given above.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODS

It is always expedient for the archaeologist to familiarize himself thoroughly with all available ethnographical data concerning the historic Indian groups which have inhabited the region in which he decides to carry on research work. Much of the evidence contained within the prehistoric earthworks and village site deposits has suffered disintegration and may be either misinterpreted or overlooked entirely if the investigator has failed to familiarize himself with the architectural details of Indian dwelling houses and public building, stockades, community plans, burial customs and numerous other cultural traits which have been recorded in the early Spanish, French and English chronicles. In order that all such data might be made available to our field investigators and to those responsible for the final interpretations made in the laboratory, several persons connected with the project have devoted nearly four years of time to library research which has produced a file of organized ethnographic data which is unique in this field of endeavor.

The validity of archaeological interpretations is always contingent upon the efficiency of the excavation techniques employed and the ability of the excavator to translate his observations of abbreviated evidence into cultural significance. Hence, in addition to a knowledge of Indian culture, he must also be thoroughly familiar with methods of excavation devised by other archaeologists. Moreover, he must be capable of initiating new ways and means of coping with variations in physical manifestations in diverse archaeological areas. Many standard techniques must be modified to fit the circumstance and others must be specially devised.

Archaeological manifestations extant in the Tennessee area assume three major forms, namely, village sites, burial mounds and substructure

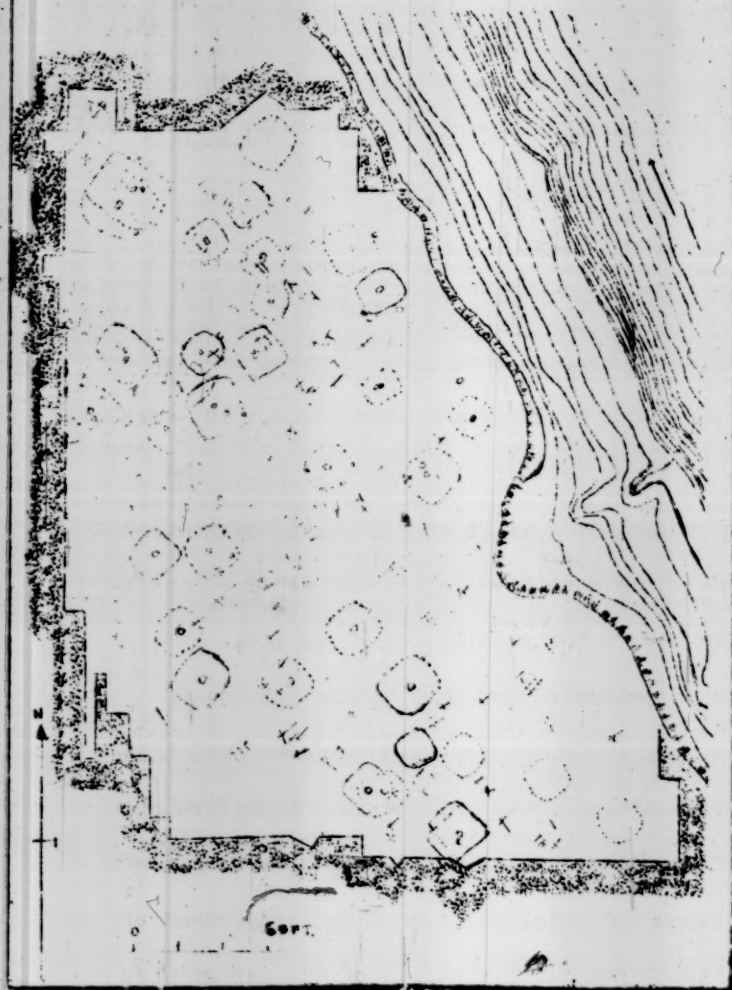
mounds. If any of these are to yield scientific information which will produce the facts concerning the aborigines who were responsible for them, they must be excavated-not haphazardly, but most meticulously. The reason for this will be evident when it is stated that village site deposits and both types of mounds nearly always show layers of horizontal soil deposition. These superimposed layers contain archaeological remains which must be segregated at the time of excavation in order to determine the chronological relationship of cultural evidence.

By making these careful separations we have been able to note that many village sites have been successively occupied by two or three cultural groups. In some instances the evidence has indicated that an earlier group was forcefully dislodged by a later group; in others there occurred an apparent amalgamation between earlier and later occupants. Finally, a careful segregation of evidence has enabled us to define many of the customs of these diverse groups and to demonstrate the differences which existed between them culturally as well as physically.

The trained eye is needed to identify a former village site. Any stretch of level bottom land along the Tennessee River and its tributaries will almost always show evidence in some particular area, unless the soil is thickly covered with vegetation. No bottom lands exist which have not been cultivated and the plow has brought to the surface the debris of former occupation in the shape of broken pottery, implements and ornaments of stone, bone and shell, fragments of animal bone and mussel shells, and usually a black organic soil throughout that portion of the former village area which was most intensively inhabited. Such concentrated areas seldom include more than four or five acres. The detritus in the peripheral areas of the sites is much too thin to yield

dependable data. Prehistoric Indian towns were laid out much in the same manner as towns are today with the greatest amount of building and other activity centering upon "Main Street".

In order to determine which particular portion of the occupational deposit will yield the most valid information the primary step in village site excavation is the digging of an east-west and a north-south trench through the deposit. These are dug to the depth of subsoil. The vertical soil profiles on the sides of these exploratory trenches afford the investigator an opportunity to select a small area for extensive excavation. Obviously those areas which have been deeply disturbed by cultivation and erosion, as indicated by the profiles, are avoided. The task of the investigator is to determine how many diverse groups of people inhabited the site successively and how each differed from the other with respect to cultural characteristics. He must therefore select an area, with the help of the soil profiles, which will provide him with the most accurate and comprehensive data. This area is then staked off in 10-foot squares and excavation begun along the face of the exploratory trench. All evidence in the form of graves, house floors, and objects of one kind or another are recorded as to stratum and horizontal location in the grid system. All observations are noted on a series of printed forms which pertain to the various kinds of evidence; features such as house floor patterns are drawn to scale on coordinate paper; numerous photographs are made; all objects are packed in bags which in turn are marked with locational data; skeletal material is packed in boxes after the skulls have been encased in paraffin to protect them during shipment to the laboratory.



Typical village plan of the late prehistoric people who lived in eastern Tennessee along the Hiwassee River.

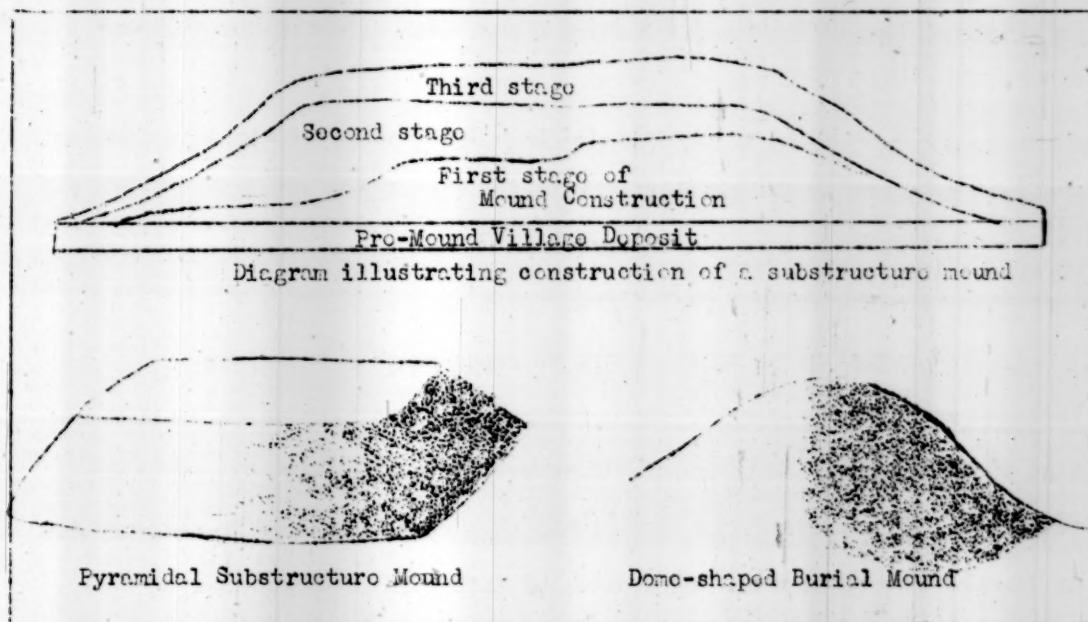
Outline of dwelling houses are shown and burials are indicated by crosses.

This plat shows the portion of the village which was excavated.

THE SUBSTRUCTURE MOUND

The substructure type of mound is the most outstanding archaeological manifestation in the Tennessee area. No other type of remains calls for more adaptations and innovations in excavating techniques. This type of earthwork did not actually begin as an artificial elevation, but rather as a selected location for a large community building in which councils and ceremonies were conducted. These locations were retained over a long period of time and constant reconstruction of community buildings took place upon them. Throughout the time period represented by these mounds there were many stylistic changes in the community center as regards both arrangement of buildings and the elaboration of the details of the substructure which supported the buildings.

In most cases the earliest structures were built without any elevated foundations beneath them, and when these were destroyed by fire or in some other manner the structures were rebuilt upon the same location, often apparently without any removal of the debris. Floors for the new buildings were formed by covering the debris with soil. Any elevated floor features such as clay platforms, seats, and fireplaces, were generally left intact and a sufficient amount of fill added to cover them in preparing the new building level. Thus as time went on new community buildings were constructed upon an ever increasing elevation. It has been noted, however, in all instances which have come under our observation that large amounts of fill were added after periods of time to greatly increase the height of these substructures, and while the base extended over a progressively larger area, the summit became more and more restricted. To compensate for this decrease in building space



additions were made to some portion of the mound in order that the summit might accommodate larger buildings. Additions were also made to the side slopes

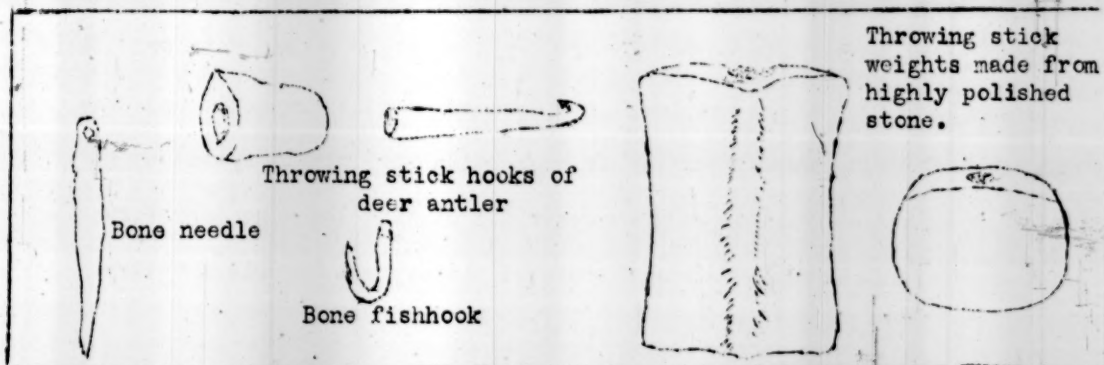
of these mounds in the form of clay ramps and stairways. In view of the complex archaeological nature of these substructures it is obvious that the excavator must work slowly and carefully if he is to secure an accurate record. Building levels are often closely superimposed - not more than a few inches between the clay floors. The walls of the buildings are evidenced by the molds left from the decayed basal ends of the vertical wall posts which were set at close intervals. Occasionally large portions of the clay floors are covered with remains of the burned superstructures in the form of charred poles, cane, grass thatching and burned clay daub.

This type of mound resembles in shape and function the stone faced pyramids of Mexico and Middle America, although those which occur in the eastern portion of Tennessee are rounding rather than rectangular in shape. The Mayas, Chichimecs, Toltecs and Aztecs superimposed new pyramidal substructures over older ones in the same manner as the aborigines of Tennessee. The chief difference between the two concepts lies in the materials used, and this is quite apparently due to a lower scale of civilization in the Tennessee area. The similarity suggests that the people responsible for these mounds in Tennessee and elsewhere in the Southeast brought the concept with them when they departed from their ancient habitat to the south.

The burial mound which occurs so frequently in the river bottoms and along the edge of the uplands facing the bottoms is smaller in size than the substructure mound. Moreover, it is dome-shaped rather than truncated. The burials contained within them range anywhere from a very few up to more than a hundred. Excavation of this type of mound is relatively simple compared with that employed in the case of the substructure mound or village site.

TENNESSEE CULTURE TYPES

We will now present briefly our knowledge concerning the various cultural horizons which have thus far been discovered in the Tennessee area. The village deposits and burials of the earliest group, a nomadic, hunting people, have been found beneath heavy alluvial deposits and subsequent deposits left by later peoples. There is a little question that they were present possibly several centuries before the beginning of the present millennium. They subsisted largely upon mussels, fish and game, and possibly wildfruits and plants. No evidence has been found to suggest that they engaged in agriculture. The village detritus contains such a great abundance of mussel shell and animal bone as to lead to the assumption that they subsisted almost entirely upon such foods. The large numbers of arrow and lance points are also indicative of their hunting proclivity. Whether they used the bow to propel the arrow is not known but frequent examples of the atlatl or throwing-stick have been found. One end of this stick bore a hook made of deer antler which engaged the butt end of an arrow. The other end of the stick was held in the hand and to the rear of the grip was secured a stone counterbalance to offset the weight of the arrowhead. These stones were neatly cut and perforated for securement to the stick. Examples have been found in which the shaft of the stick was made of bone and the entire instrument in a fair state of preservation. They made exceptionally fine implements of bone and antler such as needles, awls, chisels and fishhooks. Illustrations of some of these implements are shown below.



They made no pottery and apparently did not practice tobacco smoking as did all of the peoples to succeed them. They constructed no permanent dwelling houses, since there has been no indication whatever of stable post construction. Physically these people exhibit fewer Mongoloid characteristics than their successors, and there is ample evidence of a Negroid strain among them.

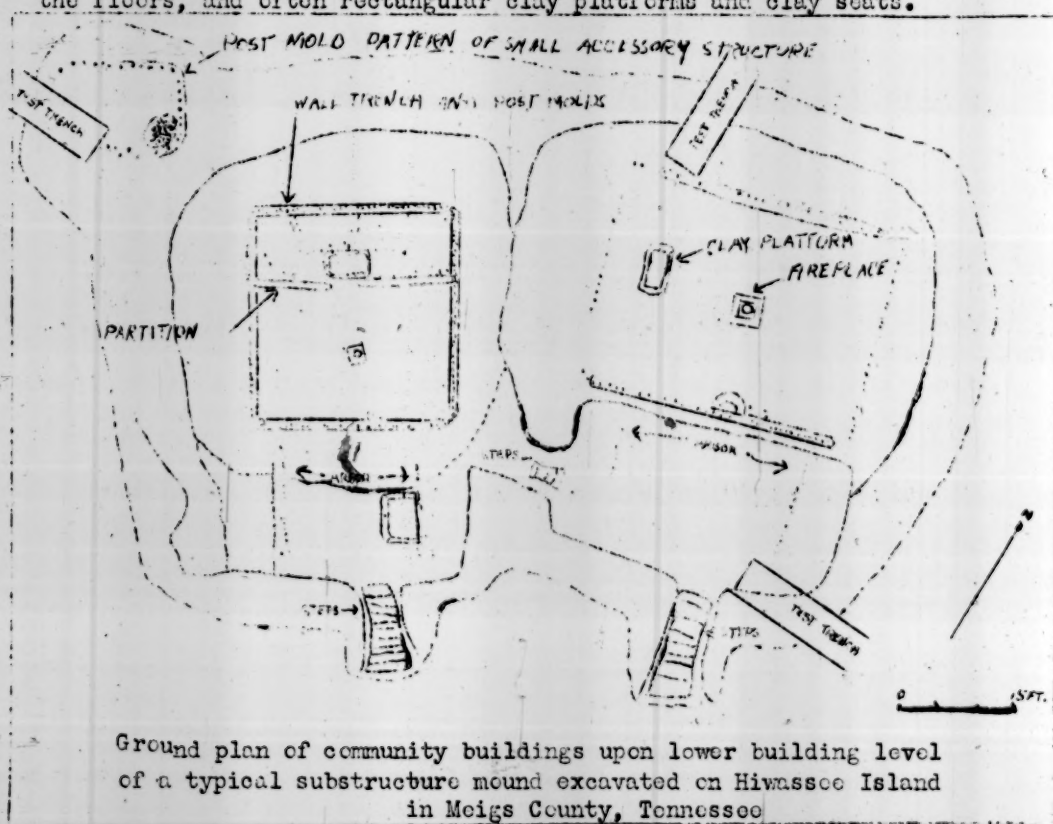
Chronologically the next group of people to inhabit the Tennessee area was a semi-sedentary group, as indicated by lacking archaeological evidence of substantially constructed dwelling houses. There were two separate directional movements of these people into the Tennessee area a century or two prior to the present millennium. The earlier movement appears to have been from the north via the Appalachian Valley and another entering by way of the lower Tennessee River. It appears that a portion of the group took up its habitat farther to the south and later moved northward into the Tennessee area. During the period of separation many of their former customs were altered by contacts with southern groups. When a comparative study was made of the archaeological evidence, it became apparent that the group which established itself at a later period in Tennessee was fundamentally similar to the earlier group which succeeded the archaic peoples. They had acquired the custom from their southern neighbors of burying their dead in mounds whereas their kinsfolk who had remained in Tennessee continued to bury their dead in pits within the village areas. Then too they had acquired the use of marine shells for ornaments from their contacts with the Gulf coast peoples and their nomadic movements had disunited them to the extent that their households were widely spaced over large areas rather than closely concentrated as with the more sedentary division of this group. The manufacture of pottery was a basic industry

with both divisions, there being no difference in the shapes of the vessels or the surface decorations in either case. No valid evidence of agricultural activities has been found. The chief source of food for the secondary division seems to have been the mussel and very little evidence of hunting exists for either division. Generally speaking, this group of people was rather low in the civilization scale because of meager population and a lack of tribal unity.

Somewhere around the beginning of the present millennium a wave of immigrant Indians entered Tennessee from the south. They came in populous numbers and dislodged the last mentioned group which had originally hailed from the north. They were a much more progressive people and they immediately established villages and towns, many of them upon the same sites which had been occupied by the dislodged inhabitants. They brought with them the concept of the substructure mound; they constructed their important buildings around a town square and exercised great care in the architectural details of their dwelling houses and community buildings. Narrow trenches were dug into the soil in which vertical poles of the framework were set about one foot apart. The trenches were then filled with clay and the upper ends of the poles bent over to form the framework of the roof. Horizontally placed poles were secured to the vertical poles at intervals to effect greater stability. Cane matting was then secured to the walls and covered with clay daub. The roof was covered with grass thatching. The uniformity in the diameter of the poles and the interstices between them was remarkable. The dwelling houses were square in form with opposite walls in true parallel alignment, the walls averaging twenty feet in length. At the center of the clay floor was a fireplace, either square or circular in outline. These were prepared by scooping out a depression

in the floor and bordering it with a modeled clay rim. These were probably used for cooking and to provide warmth during the winter. The houses were arranged in close proximity to one another, usually not more than twenty-five feet apart.

The same type of construction was used in the large community buildings, some of which were more than fifty long by more than thirty feet wide. Usually there were several of these buildings in the larger towns. During the early years of occupation these buildings were erected upon the ground level. Later they were rebuilt upon elevated substructures of clay, and access to the summits was provided by clay steps in some instances and clay ramps in others. The floors were prepared with puddled clay upon which fires were apparently burned in order to bake and harden the clay. One or two circular or rectangular fireplaces were present in the center of the floors, and often rectangular clay platforms and clay seats.



No information is available to date on the burial customs of these people. The absence of burials may possibly be accounted for by the prevalent Southeastern custom of placing the bodies in wooden chests which were kept in a special "house of the dead". If such were the case it seems likely that these buildings were generally placed at the outskirts of the village where the odors resulting from the decaying flesh would be less offensive. In fact this is suggested by the DeSoto narratives in regard to the Cofitachequi where the charnel house was at one end of the town. Since the archaeological investigations have been made in and around the community centers this may account for the failure to discover the "houses of the dead".

The pottery made by these people can always be differentiated from that of their predecessors by the tempering material mixed with the paste. This was crushed shell, whereas the older pottery contains crushed limestone. The predominant form was a jar-shaped vessel with loop handles at the shoulders. The majority of the vessels show no surface decoration. Some are uniformly coated on the exterior with a red oxide paint. Others of the decorated type exhibit designs applied with a red paint to the natural buff background of the ware. Another decoration is in the form of designs stamped into the soft surface of the vessel before firing. This was effected by means of carved wooden paddles.

In contrast to the earlier peoples these were food producers rather than food collectors. They cultivated the soil and raised corn, beans and squash. They also hunted wild game and fished and gathered wild fruits, berries and plant foods. Some of the settlements were encircled by stockades and the closely grouped dwellings within the enclosures would not have allowed space for cultivation, so it must be assumed either that the fields immediately surrounded the stockades or that

there were small hamlets attached to the main towns but situated more conveniently with reference to the agricultural lands upon which the larger communities depended for their sustenance.

Sometime after the incursion of these people, possibly a century or two, another more populous group entered the Tennessee area. In many respects they were similar to their antecedents, which probably accounts for the apparent fact that a peaceful amalgamation of the two groups occurred especially in the eastern portion of the State.

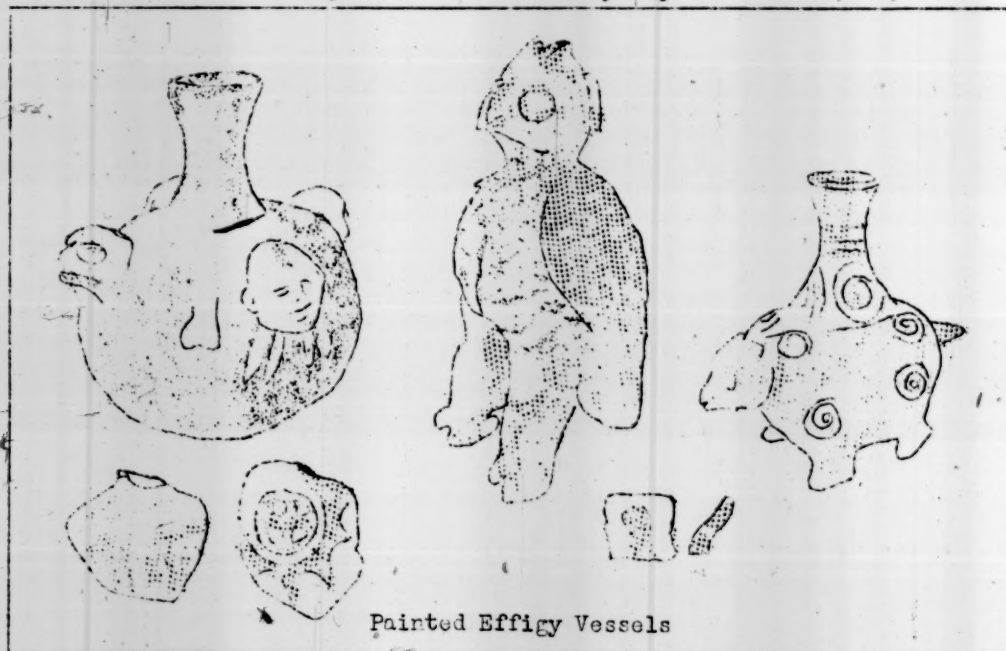
The community plan was a compact, stockaded village type with the dwelling houses adjacent to a prominently located community center. Community buildings were usually built upon elevated foundations, and the desire to obtain height in these substructures seems to have been an important objective. In most cases settlement occurred upon the town sites of earlier related people and the older community building substructures were reused wherever possible. Tremendous masses of earth were transported by the slow process of basket loads to build those foundations which were periodically renewed. Rebuilding of the community center took place in two ways. One was the simple clearing away of the debris of a dismantled or burned building and constructing another building on the same level. Frequently as many as three to five successive structures were built in this manner. The other method of rebuilding was a more extensive undertaking and involved capping the entire location with several feet of earth. This not only increased the height but also the horizontal extent. The intention apparently was to renew the foundation completely and to cover all evidence of the former architecture. The latter mode of rebuilding gives the impression that there may have been some recurring cycle which prompted the periodic reconstruction of the council house foundation. Although height

may not have been the primary consideration in building up the foundation for the public buildings it might be surmised that long established communities derived considerable prestige from the imposing height of the substructure upon which their council houses stood particularly if the renewal of the foundation was related to some regularly recurring cycle or the commemoration of some outstanding event. Communities which had been stabilized in a certain location long enough to construct a mound of marked elevation would presumably be influential in a region. In a few cases where these people settled in locations not previously occupied by their immediate predecessors the first council houses were built upon the original land surface.

Architecture presented considerable contrast with that of the earlier people. Large, rigid posts were used in the framework of the buildings. The wall posts were not set in trenches after the manner of the earlier people, but were set in individual holes. Cane was used to fill in the interstices and clay daub was added. The roofs were thatched. In general the buildings were not as carefully constructed as with the earlier inhabitants. The one exception was in the case of a very elaborate and carefully constructed community building where two exterior vestibule entrances gave access on two sides, with an antechamber present at the outer end of one entrance. The entire interior wall of this square building, except at one entrance, was encircled by a broad, low clay bench having partitions dividing it into sections. As a rule the council house differed little from the dwelling house except in size.

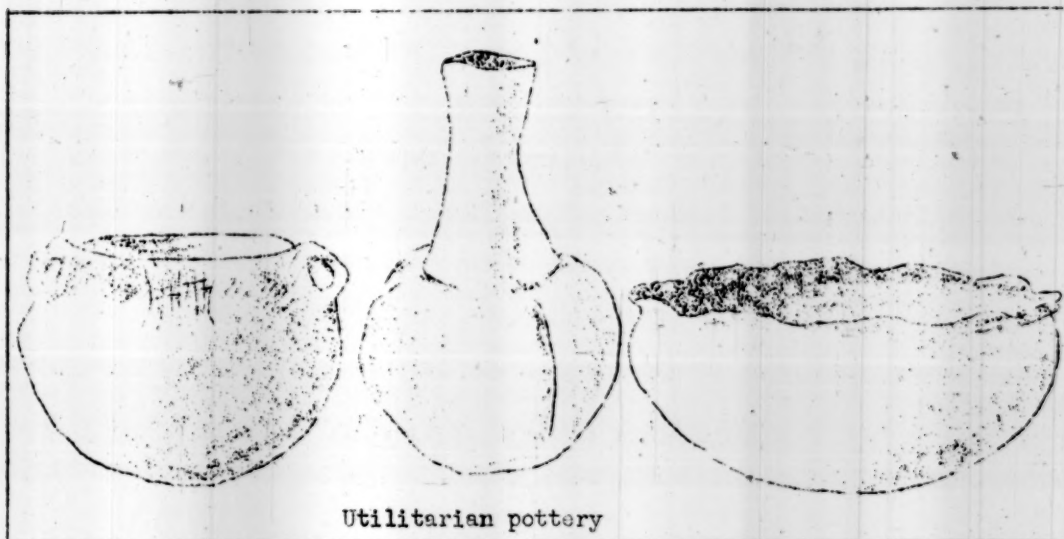
The dead were usually buried around the house or in the sides or summits of the substructure mounds. The bodies were always laid in a flexed position with the legs bent at the knees and hips and usually the arms bent

at the elbows. The degree to which the arms and legs were bent varied somewhat, the majority of burials showing only partial flexion, but a considerable number having closely flexed legs. Occasionally the bodies were wrapped in twilled cane matting or protected with covers of wood or bark. Stone-lined graves were used exclusively in the central portion of the State where laminated limestone is abundant. In the eastern portion the grave pits were infrequently lined with limestone slabs because of the scarcity of this material. Objects which accompanied the burials included some of the finest examples of aboriginal craftsmanship in pottery, shell and copper. Much of this material had apparently been part of the costume of the deceased, but there were many objects of every day use.



In comparison to the earlier people the pottery was much more ornately decorated. Some of it is a fine textured ware, usually made from a buff-firing ball clay sparsely tempered with finely ground shell and decorated with negative painted designs in black and buff or black and

gray. In eastern Tennessee this pottery occurs invariably in the form of bottles frequently having modeled human or zoomorphic effigy decoration in addition to the painting. When the effigy features are lacking the design is usually the so-called "sun-symbol" with a central cross motif inclosed in a circular area and surrounded by radiating elements. Only rarely are any sherds of this pottery found in the refuse and the type is mainly known from the occurrence as burial accompaniments. This fact added to its wide distribution, rather than the technical superiority of the pottery in comparison with the bulk of the local ceramics, argues for it having been a trade ware.



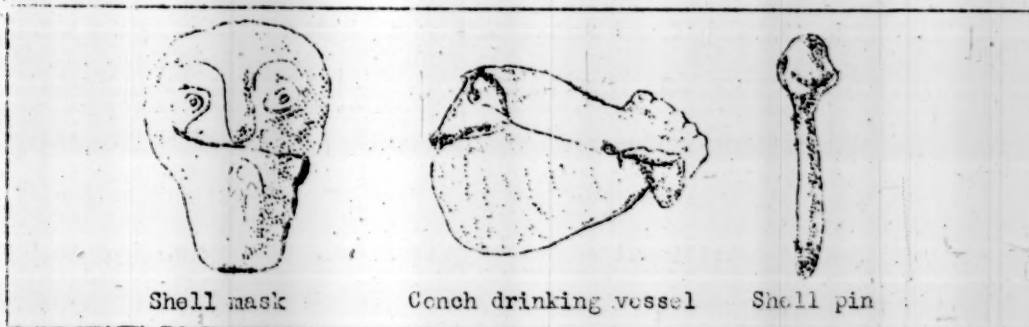
Utilitarian pottery

Bone objects comprised an important part of the technology. Tools of the awl class were especially numerous. These consisted of three major types which probably served different purposes. A relatively thick and short pointed type was made from the turkey tarsometatarsus bone, the ulna of deer, the leg bones of various small mammals, or thick splinters. This was a more sturdy implement than the second type of awl which was slender and had a long delicately tapered point. Most of the latter were made from bone splinters and varied in size from that of a toothpick to a large knit-

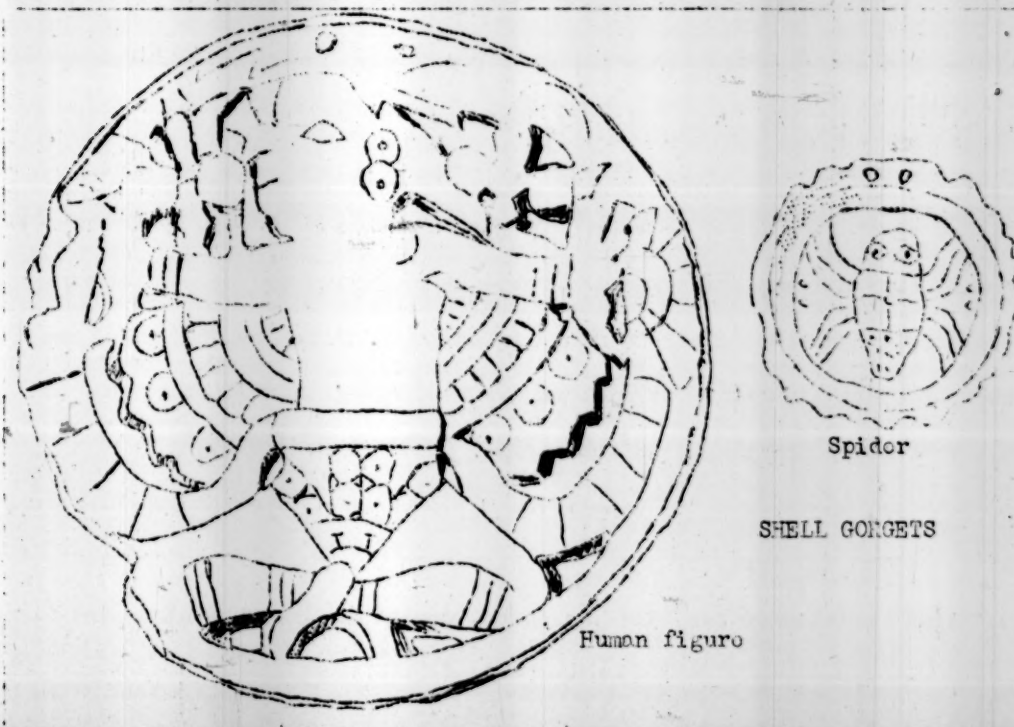
ting needle. The third type which was double tapered and generally well finished may have been used as a projectile tip. Projectile points made from deer antler, occasionally socketted at the base for attachment to a shaft, were used, and it seems not at all unlikely that the double tapered bone objects were adapted to the same function, although a different mode of attachment would have been necessary -- possibly inserted in a hollow cane shaft. Objects made from the obliquely split leg bones of deer and resembling a gouge in shape appear to have been implements of special significance, since they were frequently elaborately engraved over the entire convex surface. The sharpened end was usually a curved bit and may have been used for scraping purposes, but it is hard to conceive of a highly ornamented object having served for common task such as fleshing hides, although more roughly made examples of the type may have been so used. Antler flakers, bone fishhooks and the "beamer" or drawknife were types which occurred in minor quantities. Tubular beads, turtle shell rattles and hairpins with carved heads were used as ornaments.

The craftsmanship exhibited in the objects made of shell was one of the highest accomplishments of these people. In addition to using several different varieties of small marine shell and fresh water pearls for beads, they cut and shaped many large and small beads from large marine conchs and fresh water species of clam. A number of simple objects such as spoons and scrapers were made from the river shells, but for the majority of ornaments the large marine *Busyon* or *Cassis* species were used. Large and small knob-headed pins made from the columellae were quite abundant. The large drinking vessel made from conchs having the columellae and a portion of the wall removed were undoubtedly the same as those described by early observers of the southeastern peoples and which were said to have

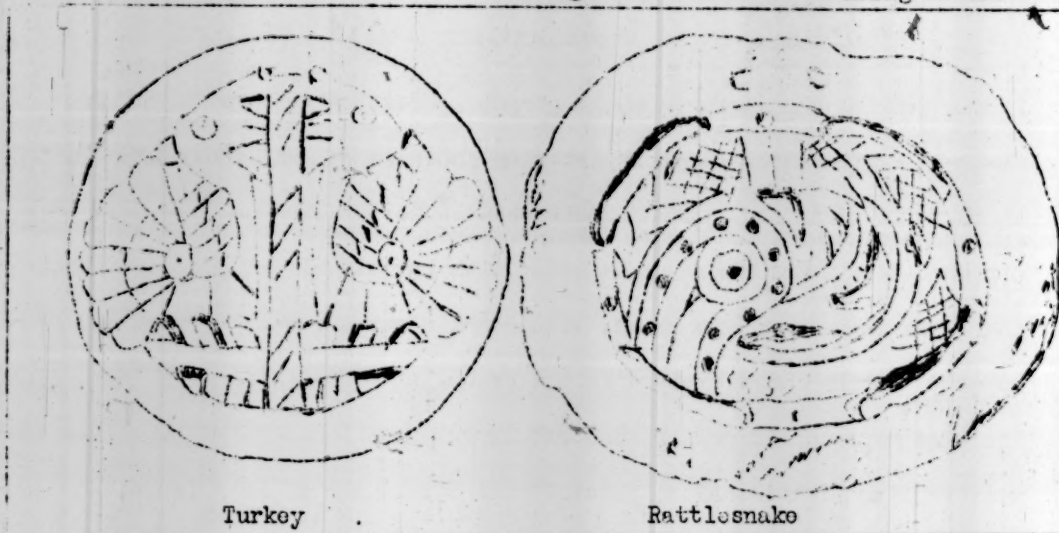
been used at tribal councils for the ceremonial "black drink" imbibed on those occasions. Some of the most beautiful examples of North American



Indian art are the engraved shell gorgets. Most of these were cut from the wall of the large *Butycon perversum* and were generally circular in shape. Two small holes for suspension were bored near one edge, and the circumstances under which these occur with burials clearly indicate that they were worn around the neck. The concave surface was engraved and frequently portions were excised in the execution of the designs. These designs included representations of elaborately costumed human figures, highly conventionalized rattlesnakes, naturalistic turkey cocks and spiders, and geometrical patterns employing a cross or triskele as the central motifs.

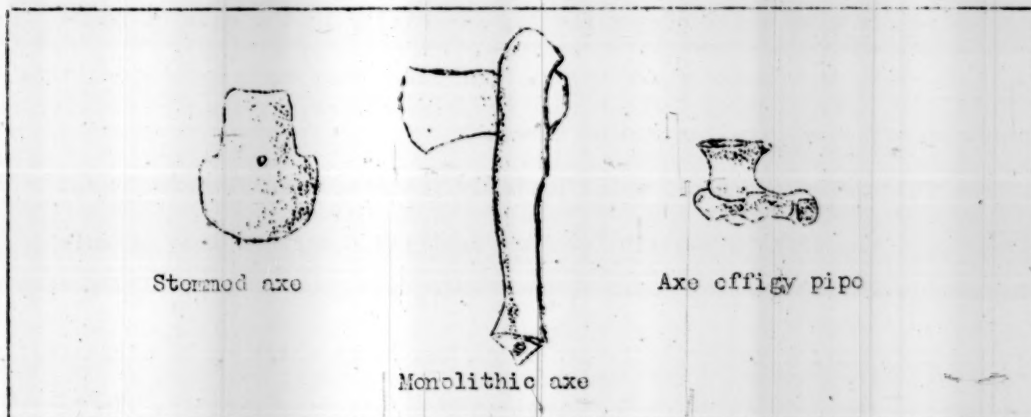


Both technically and artistically the shell gorgets were a high achievement. Most of these were found buried with young adult females or children and only rarely with male individuals. To speculate that the gorgets represented clan insignia which were worn primarily by females might not be far from the facts when one considers that most of the historic southeastern nations had matrilineal social organizations. The wearing of the

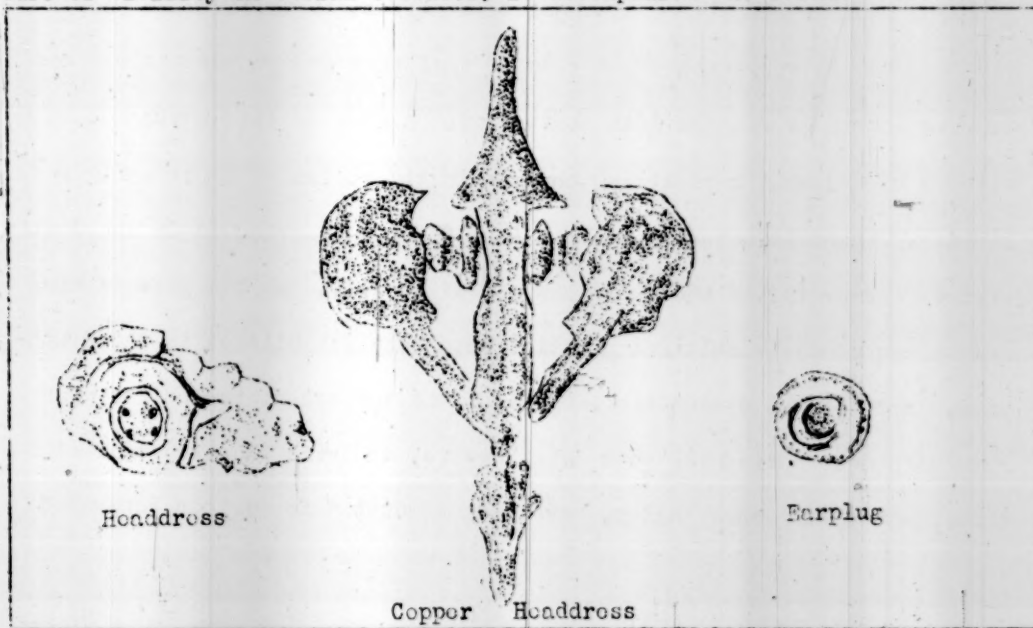


clan insignia possibly to represent the clan totem might well have been a custom in a society where clan membership and social relationships were reckoned through the female line of descent. Resembling the shell gorgets in some respects were the shell masks. These were somewhat pear-shaped and had two perforations corresponding to the eyes of a very conventionalized face. The face which was indicated by engraving on the convex surface usually showed a nose and mouth in addition to the eye holes. Possibly of special mortuary significance were the engraved lines around the eyes and on the cheeks of the masks. Small stone disks, mortars, and pestles, whetstones and hammerstones presented no distinctive features, but there were two types of stone objects which deserve particular mention: the "spud" or stemmed axe blade, and the monolithic axe with blade and

handle made from a single block of stone. Both of these types seem to have been symbolic rather than utilitarian objects. The stemmed axe was occasionally represented in miniature as a pendant, and the monolithic axe portrayed in effigy as a pipe. The symbolic meaning is obscure but it is more likely to have been related to political rather than religious matters.



This interpretation is based largely on the relationship implied between the custom of smoking and the symbol of the axe as presented in the axe-shaped pipes. Pipe smoking was prevalent among all of the southeastern peoples and the act was usually invested with social significance. It was a gesture of civility in social contacts; it accompanied the solemn deliberations



of the council meetings, at which a special pipe-bearer officiated, and it was a symbol of friendly intentions in negotiating peace treaties. The copper objects are particularly interesting. They were primarily ornamental in usage consisting chiefly of head-dresses, pendants and ear plugs. All were made from thin sheet native copper. Occasionally sections were fastened together with small copper rivets, especially in the case of head-dresses where the design was complex. Ear plugs were made by shaping thin sheet copper over circular wooden disks.

This group of people which probably inhabited the Tennessee area from about the 13th to the 17th century exhibits a certain lack of uniformity with respect to certain traits. This is unquestionably due to two factors, namely, a temporal difference in the sites which we have examined and changes brought about by contacts with neighboring peoples. In the eastern portion of the State the earlier manifestations differ from the later manifestations. These changes were probably brought about by intermarriage with other neighboring groups, by new inventions, and as the result of efforts to adapt life better to a new environment. It is a moot question as to whether some of the later manifestations of these people do not actually represent other related immigrant groups who entered the Tennessee area around the 16th century with a mode of life which had been altered by cultural borrowings acquired in the region of their earlier habitat. Insufficient research has thus far been carried on in the Southeast to answer all of the questions satisfactorily. At the present time only a few complete cultural entities have been established in the Southeast. Most of the systematic investigations throughout the entire area have been made during the past eight years, and with the exception of those in the Tennessee Valley, have been conducted in regions separated

from each other by considerable distances. No one area can have a true perspective of all of southern prehistory, but separate reconstructions based upon the viewpoints stressed in the various regions should contribute to eventual correct interpretations. Many of the interpretations which have come out of the extensive research in Tennessee during the past eight years have far-reaching significance in the prehistory of the eastern United States. While some of the conclusions will necessarily have to remain tentative until additional facts are discovered as more work is done, it may be mentioned, nevertheless, that the large accumulation of yet unpublished data contained within the files of the Laboratory of Anthropology represent a sincere attempt to achieve the aims of archaeology to reconstruct unrecorded human history and to determine the processes, both historical and sociological, which have entered into it.

NOTICES AND REVIEWS OF RECENT BOOKS

Hoosier Folklore Bulletin

A new folklore periodical has appeared -- the Hoosier Folklore Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1, June, 1942; issued by the Hoosier Folklore Society, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. It is mimeographed and quite similar in get-up to the Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin. Herbert Halpert of the English department, Indiana University, is editor.

The first issue is given over entirely to cante fables, "tall tales, windies and just plain lies," thirty pages of them. This is quite appropriate. Indiana folk are thus putting their best foot foremost. In a state which has a Stith Thompson, world authority on folktales, not to mention such excellent folklorists as Paul G. Brewster and Herbert Halpert, one might expect such stress. But the editor reassures his readers that songs, games and all the rest will not be neglected in future issues.

The Hoosier Folklore Society is now in its sixth year of activity. Their April annual meetings are featured by an out-of-state guest speaker. (An idea for us Tennesseans!) Herbert Halpert is its present president.

The Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin hails the new Hoosier Folklore Bulletin and wishes it a long and useful life. The Hoosier publication costs but a dollar a year, or four dollars together with the Journal of American Folklore, a saving of one dollar.

George Pullen Jackson

Check List of Recorded Songs

Library of Congress, Music Division. Check-list of Recorded Songs in the English Language in the Archive of American Folk Song to July, 1940. Washington, D. C., Mimeographed by the Library of Congress, 1942.

John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax started in 1933 to make recordings of American folksongs for the Library of Congress. They have continued their work and have assisted folklorists to make sound recording in thirty-three states. This wealth of material is now available to scholars and students. "Each entry in the alphabetical index includes the title of the song, the name of the singer(s) or (and) performer(s), the place and date of the recording, the name of the collector(s) and the call number of the disk on which the song is recorded. In addition to this alphabetical listing, each title appears again in the geographical index under its proper state and county."

"The records in this collection are not available for loan and cannot be sent out of the building for duplication. For this reason, a duplication service has been set up. ...Most of the songs that appear in this

list are freely available for personal, non-commercial or educational use to those who wish to order copies. ...The Library will produce copies of records in its collection available for research use but reserves the right to decline to make the duplicates requested. In order to obtain copies of any of the disks, it is necessary first to write to the Archive of American Folk Song, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., for an estimate of the cost of duplication, giving the entire entry for each song as it appears in the alphabetical index. All prices are subject to change without notice. All duplicates will be of glass base acetate, easily breakable, and will wear quickly if not played with a light arm or pick-up." ECK.

Down-East Spirituals and Others.

Jackson, George Pullen. Down-East Spirituals and Others. New York, J. J. Augustin, Inc. Announced for August 1, 1942. Three hundred songs (tunes and texts) with Introduction and indexes. 300 pp. \$5.50.

Augustin announces: "Down-East Spirituals brings the surprise which its title indicates. As Dr. Jackson's path-finding work (White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands) became known, he received reports even from New England of the finding of this and that spiritual folk-song in old records of that region. His first thought was that they had wandered thither from the South. But the author's careful search of the archives of the North-east soon revealed to him the records of a one-time rich spiritual folk-song tradition there which antedated the southern tradition by at least a generation. And the upshot of this was his present conviction that spiritual folk-songs did not develop first in the Upland South but in Upland Vermont, Upland New Hampshire and Contiguous parts." ECK.

Our Singing Country

Lomax, John A., and Alan Lomax. Our Singing Country. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1941. \$5.00.

Macmillan says: "Here are new songs and old - to sing and to delight in. As Lewis Gannett said of the first volume, 'You cannot read these pages without humming and remembering and trying to recall the exact words of the old songs as you knew them long ago.'"

"To students of folk songs the book is indispensable. They will appreciate the Bibliography which lists the most important books and pamphlets of American Folk Songs published since 1934, as well as valuable articles which have appeared. But to everyone the book offers a wealth of pleasure - and the opportunity to know these songs as they are sung by the people who make them and keep them alive." ECK.

Slave Songs of the Georgia Sea Islands

Parrish, Lydia. Slave Songs of the Georgia Sea Islands, with an Introduction by Olin Downes, Music Transcribed by Creighton Churchill and

Robert MacGimsey. New York, Creative Age Press. \$3.50.

(Miss Mildred Haun has a review of this book in The Nashville Tennessean, June 14, 1942).

COMMENTS AND NOTES

Comments on Our Last Issue

George Pullen Jackson: "The last number of the Tennessee Bulletin was fine. Doesn't Hunter write interestingly!"

John A. Lomax: "In the last number I enjoyed particularly Professor Hunter's story, 'My Grandfather's Speech.' Such articles are invaluable."

Do You Know the Story of the Vanishing Hitch-Hiker?

Miss Rosalie Hankey is collecting stories of the vanishing hitch-hiker for the California Folklore Quarterly, and writes: "the story we are collecting usually concerns a woman, old or young, who is picked up by a motorist, gives her address, but disappears mysteriously before the driver reaches her home. Upon inquiring at the address, the driver learns that his passenger had been dead for a number of years (varying from 1 to 15). Another version contains a prophecy made by the woman before she disappears. In yet another version the girl asks to be let out at a cemetery. She does not return and the driver goes to look for her finding his coat, which he had lent her, hanging on a gravestone."

South Carolina Folk Tales (pp. 72 ff.), recently published as a Bulletin of the University of South Carolina, contains a version of this story. If any of our readers know versions of this story, please send your version with your name and address to Miss Rosalie Hankey, 2614 Etta Street, Berkeley, California. ECK.

Recordings Continued by Library of Congress

Despite war conditions the United States government is still making it possible for Alan Lomax and his staff to carry on, as yet uninterruptedly, the building up of the Archive of American Folklore. This work undertaken by the Music Division of the Library of Congress has already brought 6,000 phonograph discs with between 18,000 and 20,000 individual recordings of a wide variety of folk materials to the shelves of the Archive, and the collection is growing constantly. Mr. Lomax had several recorders in the field. In August he will personally record in Oklahoma and (Sacred Harp singings) in southern Tennessee. GPJ.

Affiliation with AFS and SEFS

Professor Ermine N. Voegelin, editor of the Journal of American Folklore, writes: "Has the Tennessee Folklore Society ever considered the matter of affiliating with the AFS? If you are at all interested, we would be glad to send details concerning how it is done." Professor Alton C. Morris, editor of the Southern Folklore Quarterly, has written concerning an affiliation with the SEFS. I have written for details concerning affiliation with these organizations, and will present these details at our annual meeting. ECK.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY Tennessee Polytechnic Institute Cookeville, Tennessee November 7, 1942

Professor T. J. Farr, of Tennessee Polytechnic Institute and the officers of the society are working on a program that should be interesting and profitable to all who attend. The theme of the meeting is to be folklore and its relation to other fields of study, although papers will not be limited to this theme. Mrs. Benton Terry, of Cookeville, will present a paper on Negro Lore; Professor Hayes, of Vanderbilt University, will discuss sociology and folklore; Professor Paul Soper, of the University of Tennessee, will discuss the meaning of folk drama. Other papers on similar subjects are being arranged.

Actual folklore in the form of songs, dances, or singing games will be scheduled. Every one who has attended previous meetings at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute will be looking forward to another pleasant and profitable day. ECK.

SACRED HARP ASSOCIATION

The fourth annual convention of the Tennessee State Sacred Harp Singing Association will take place at Peabody College in Nashville on the first Sunday in October and the Saturday before (October 3 and 4). Over a hundred singers from Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia took part in the convention last October. All friends of folk-song as well as those who would like to learn to sing these remarkable "tonal antiques" are invited to attend. The sessions will be from nine-thirty to four each day, with the traditional "dinner on the grounds" at midday. The hundred-years-old Sacred Harp may be obtained ahead of time or at the convention at \$1.00 from Dr. George Pullen Jackson, chairman of the association, Vanderbilt University, Nashville. GPJ.

National State and Regional Folklore Societies, 1942

American Folklore Society. Pres., Harold W. Thompson, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.; Sec'y.-Treas., D. S. Davidson, Box 14, Bennett Hall, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa. The Journal of American Folklore, editor, Erminie W. Voegelin, Social Science Bldg., Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind.

California. Pres. Robert Gordon Sproul, University of California, Berkeley; Sec'y.-Treas., Samuel T. Farquhar, University of California Press, Berkeley. California Folklore Quarterly, editors, Archer Taylor, University of California, Berkeley, and Gustavo O. Arlt, University of California, Los Angeles.

Canadian. Pres., Gustave Lanctot, Dominion Archives, Ottawa; Sec'y., R. A. Benoit, Parliament Buildings, Quebec; Treas., Aline Larose, Dominion Archives, Ottawa.

Hoosier. Pres., Herbert Halpert, Indiana University, Bloomington; Sec'y.-Treas., Mrs. Ross Hickam, 501 East First St., Bloomington, Ind. Hoosier Folklore Bulletin, editor, Herbert Halpert.

Kentucky. Pres., Lucy B. Thomas, Lebanon; Sec'y., Mrs. J. L. Duncan, Barberry Lane, Louisville; Treas., Gordon Wilson, Western Kentucky State Teachers College, Bowling Green. Bulletin of the Kentucky Folklore Society.

Michigan. Chairman, Thelma James, Wayne University, Detroit; Sec'y.-Treas., Ruth Barnes, Michigan State Normal College, Ypsilanti. Publications in Proceedings, Michigan Academy of Arts and Science.

North Carolina. Pres., George P. Wilson, Woman's College, University of North Carolina, Greensboro; Sec'y.-Treas., Frank C. Brown, Duke University, Durham.

Pennsylvania. Pres., Henry W. Shoemaker, Box 431, Ottoona; Hon. Sec., George Korson, 1301 15th St., N. W., Washington, D. C.; Sec., Mrs. E. C. Ottosen, Canton, Pa.

Pennsylvania German. Pres. Benjamin S. Meehling, Riverton, N. J.; Sec'y., Samuel H. Ziegler, 1820 Pennsylvania St., Allentown, Pa.; Treas., Edwin M. Fogel, Fogelsville, Pa. Publications of the Pennsylvania Folklore Society, Chairman, publications committee, Harry H. Reichard, Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa.

Southeastern. Pres., Fletcher Collins, Jr., Elon College, Elon College P. O., N. C.; Sec'y.-Treas., Thomas B. Stroup, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla. Southern Folklore Quarterly, editor, Alton C. Morris, University of Florida, Gainesville, Fla.

Texas. Pres., John A. Lomax, 7456 San Benito Way, Dallas; Sec'y., J. Frank Dobie, University Station, Austin; Treas., Marcelle Lively Hamer, University Station, Austin. Publications of the Texas Folklore Society, editors, J. Frank Dobie, Mody C. Boatright, Harry H. Ransom, Austin.